

THE FIRST LIE;

OR

FALSEHOOD ITS OWN PUNISHMENT.

SHEWING THE MISERY OCCASIONED BY

DISOBEDIENCE TO PARENTS.



NEW HAVEN.

BABCOCK—CHURCH STREET.

1835.

CHILDREN'S BOOK
COLLECTION

LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

THE FIRST LIE;

OR

FALSEHOOD ITS OWN PUNISHMENT.

SHEWING THE MISERY OCCASIONED BY

DISOBEDIENCE TO PARENTS.



NEW HAVEN.

S. BABCOCK—CHURCH STREET.

1835.

THE FIRST LIE.

“*The first lie!*”—I hear some little girl or boy exclaim as they read the title of this tale—“What is *the first lie?* What does it mean, mamma?” Ah, my little readers! how happy are you, if you have never told your *first lie*! And how happy would I be, if I could save you from *ever* telling it! For oh, from what an endless and cruel succession of suffering, and sorrow, and sin, I would save you! Nobody can ever tell *one* lie, for they may think that they will never, never tell another, but just this *one*—yet, when *that one*, or *this one*, is told, they will find that two, or three, or four, or six, perhaps a dozen, are told to keep up the credit of the first—and so they end in being utterly wicked, and what always follows *that*, utterly unhappy and miserable. Listen very attentively to what I am going to tell you, and try to remember it whenever you feel yourself tempted to tell a lie.

Charles Annesley was just nine years old; he had a kind papa and mamma, who did all in their power to make him a good boy—they taught him to pray, and to know that the great and good Being to whom he prayed, watches over all his creatures, and never will forsake them while they remember Him, and try to please Him by doing all that he has commanded us in the Bible: and that when tempted to do any wrong or wicked action, we should instantly turn our thoughts to Him

—cry out in our own hearts—“ Oh, Father in heaven, save me from wishing to do this thing”—and he will strengthen us to resist doing it. Until the time Charles went to a public school, he was indeed a very good little boy : he was gentle, obedient, and fearful of doing any thing he had been told was bad ; but when he went to school, he heard other boys—bad, wicked, ill bred boys, brag of doing wrong, and of being disobedient to their mammas,—at first he was much frightened and shocked to hear them, and he did what his mamma bid him, he turned away and did not listen to their talk or make companions of them. By degrees, however, he began to forget his mamma’s orders—played with these boys, and though he did not do any thing so wrong as they did, he laughed at their bad words, and thought it *funny* when they boasted they wouldn’t do what papa or mamma bid them. This was Charles’ first fault, and it was a great one—it led to all the rest.

But there was in Charles’ original character a great fault. He was very proud, and he could not bear to see other children have any thing which he had not. His papa was far from being rich, and could not give him money to throw away upon toys or trash of any kind : and Charles was so silly as to allow it to mortify him, when he heard the bad boys he now made his companions boasting of what they had, and how much money they had spent on this or that folly. These boys soon observed that Charles was mortified, and with a wicked, unamiable

feeling, they did all they could to increase it, and to irritate him, by remarking that he never had any money or any fine play-things.

Now, little boys and girls, stop here, and consider what a terrible thing the first fault is—the first disobedience to papa or mamma, when you are out of their sight,—you never can tell how far astray it will lead you ! Had Charles, as his parents desired him, avoided the company of these boys altogether, he never would have had this bad passion of envy raised in his poor little heart :—or been led into the sad situation I am going to tell you about.



One day as he was running home from school, he saw, lying upon the road, a large red pocket-book with a steel clasp—he lifted it, and tried to open it, but could not undo the clasp—so he set off running as fast as he could to shew it to his

mamma ; but as he run, he saw a gentleman walking before him, and he thought to himself, " perhaps this gentleman has dropped this pocket-book,"—so, putting the pocket-book out of sight under his jacket, he accosted the gentleman and asked if he had lost any thing? The gentleman looked at him quite surprised, and said, " No, not that I know of ;" then suddenly putting his hand to his coat-pocket, he started, and said, " Indeed but I have—I have lost my pocket-book."—" Oh then," said Charles, quite gladly, " I have found it, see, is not that it ?" " It is, and I assure you, my fine little fellow, you do not know what an escape I have had ; for had I lost that pocket-book, or even wanted the valuable papers it contains, this afternoon,—I would have been a most miserable, nay, almost a ruined man." Charles said he was very glad indeed that he had found it,—and was just going to run away, when the gentleman took a dollar out of his pocket, saying, he was sorry that he had no more loose money about him, begged him to take that, " and buy something pretty with it." —Charles hesitated, for his father and mother had always told him that it was very mean to accept presents of money from strangers, and had forbid him to do so—but the thoughts of being able to buy "*pretty things*" overcame his good feelings, and with a blushing face and a trembling hand he took the dollar.—The gentleman asked his own and his papa's name, and went away.

Now came the struggle in Charles' mind—the good spirit in his heart urged him to go at once

to his papa and mamma, and tell them what had happened; confess the fault he had committed in taking the dollar at all, and consult them how he should spend it;—but then the bad spirit tempted him with the thoughts of all the delights of being able to show off his riches, and his pretty things, to those who had sneered at him for his poverty: and at last the evil spirit overcame, and poor foolish Charles determined to conceal the dollar, and spend it secretly.

Had he, when he felt thus tempted to be bad, thrown himself on his knees, and begged of God to help him to do that which was right, he would have been helped, he would have been made strongly to remember that God *never* fails fearfully to punish sin; and that one sin always leads to another and another. Again, he would have been helped to remember, how impossible it was that a little boy like him could spend so much money as a dollar, and it not be found out by his papa and mamma; and all the shame and disgrace and misery that would follow. But Charles did not pray; and none of these thoughts came into his head; nothing came into it but the poor, silly, wicked delight of being able to mortify his companions.

He ran home, and ate his dinner in the greatest hurry. For the first time in his life he sought no kiss from his mamma when he went in; he did not even look in her face. As soon as he had swallowed his dinner, he jumped off his chair and rushed out of the house, without waiting for the kiss and the blessing, with which that affection-

ate mother always sent him out to school or to play. It was not that he forgot it. No; but something made him feel that he was not worthy to receive it. Wo to the little boy ; aye, or to the grown man, who rushes on any action on which he feels he cannot ask his mother's blessing!

Charles ran at full speed to a toy-shop, at the door and windows of which he had often lingered, gazing in admiration at its many-colored treasures. From amongst those he now selected so many, and in such evident haste and trepidation, that the man of the shop looked at him very much, and when he presented the silver dollar to pay for all the trash he had picked out, he said, —“ Pray, little master, how did such a little fellow as you come by so much money as this ?” Charles' face grew quite scarlet. What was easier than to say, “ a gentleman gave it me for finding his pocket-book ?” But no ; when once people have given themselves up to the bad spirit, it is most extraordinary how *foolish* are the things they do. He stammered, and said, “ I found it.” “ You *found* it, my dear,” said the man ; “ then do you not know that it is **not yours** to spend ; it belongs to the person who has lost it, and you should try to find out who he is. I do not like to sell you anything for money which is not honestly your own.” “ I think,” said Charles, bursting with fury, “ that you are a very impertinent man ; what is your business to speak that way to me ?” and snatching up the dollar, he darted out of the shop, and ran to ano-

ther, where the people gave him what he asked for, and changed the dollar, without asking any questions; but as these people were not honest, like the other man, they cheated him, because they saw that he was a little silly boy, who knew nothing about money or its value: and Charles was quite astonished to find how few things he had, and how little remained of his dollar, which he had supposed quite an inexhaustible sum; that he might buy, and buy, and buy with, before it could be gone. He felt that the people were cheating him, but he did not know what to do. He was afraid to say any thing, lest they too should ask where he got the dollar.

Angry, discontented, and unhappy, he lifted up his purchases to come away, when a new difficulty came into his mind. If he met his papa, or mamma, or any of the servants, when he was going along loaded with these things, what would he say? After thinking a little, he said to the people, that he would leave some of his things, and call for them again. So, stuffing the balls, and the top, and the marbles into his pockets, and taking the battledore and shuttlecock in his hand, he walked away. When he came opposite to the town clock, he looked up, and saw, with a dreadful start, that it was only ten minutes from three. The school had been in nearly an hour. He had never in his life played truant—his parents had ever warned him against it as a great sin—he felt, that having done so that afternoon, exposed him to almost certain detection about the

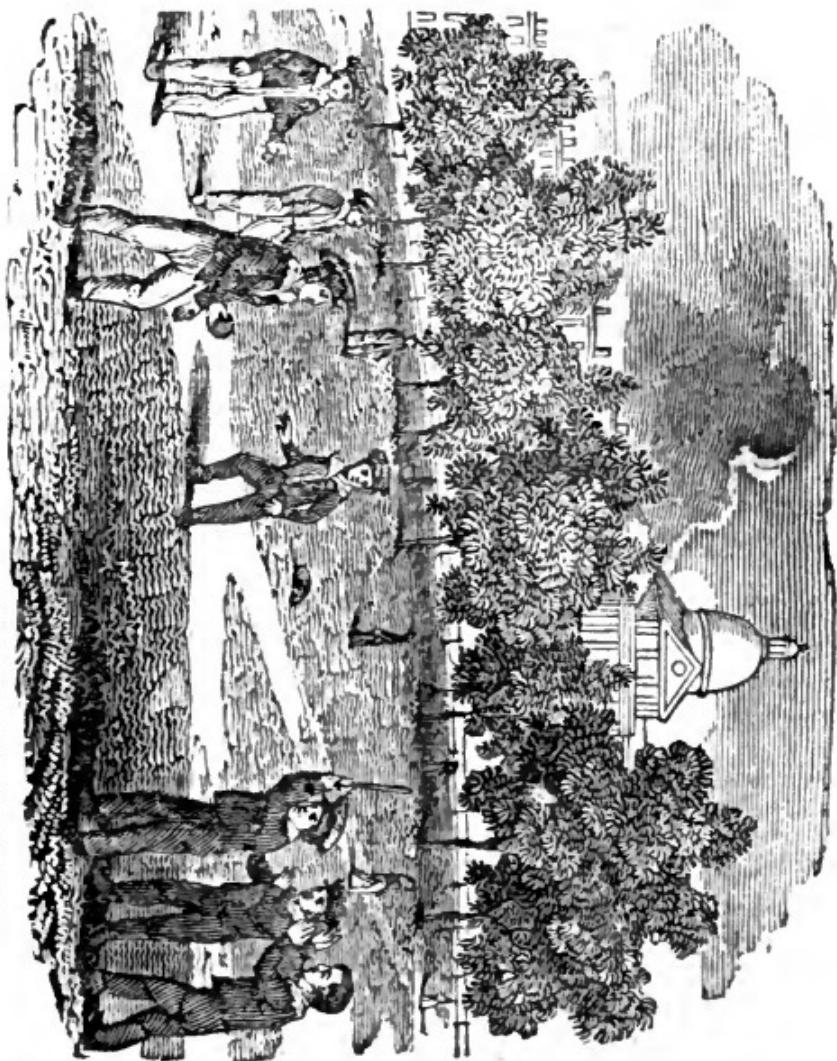
dollar. A feeling of perfect wretchedness, such as he had never, never, before felt, rushed through his heart—he burst into tears; and as he hung despairingly by the rails of the house he was passing, he wished he had never seen the dollar.—“What shall I do?” said he to himself; “Shall I go home and tell mamma all about it?” “But there was terror in the thought of all the displeasure she and his papa would feel, the punishment they would inflict—and then the loss of their good opinion! Ah, poor little Charles! Had he even then prayed, his heavenly Father would have made him feel how much better and easier it would have been to bear that, than to go on plunging from sin to sin, and lie to lie.—But he did not pray.

As he stood, not knowing what to do, his papa came round the corner of the street. He was talking to another gentleman, and did not see Charles, but his terror knew no bounds. He flew down a little lane, and ran, and ran, like a guilty thing as he was, till he got into a broad street, where he had never been before—and there he stopped, like to drop down with fear and fatigue. As he slowly walked along, frightened at having lost his way, but relieved that he had escaped from his papa, whom, at other times, he used to run to meet, he saw a pastry-cook’s shop, with many nice things, and such a nice smell coming out of it. He remembered the remains of the dollar that was in his pocket, and going in, he asked for a tart. It was given to him, and he took out his shillings and paid for it. ‘The woman

of the shop, seeing he had so much money, said to him, "I think you seem very hot and tired, master; you had better sit down on this couch, and eat your tart." Charles was very glad of the offer; and while he was eating the tart, she kept recommending this nice thing, and that nice thing, and then almost forced him to eat a quantity of different things—while she praised his beauty, and said she was sure his papa must be some great gentleman, he was such a *very* pretty little boy.

Meanwhile, some very riotous young men came into the shop and began to eat fruit, and drink liquors. One of them looked at Charles several times, and then said, "Well, my little hearty, you seem to *eat* plenty; let's see if you can drink any!" and he offered Charles a glass of cordial. He refused it, but the wicked young man insisted, and Charles put it to his lips; it was very sweet, and pleasant tasted, so he continued to sip at it till he had drunk more than half the glass-full. The young man looked on and laughed, and said to his companions, "It's good fun to see a little chap like that drunk." At hearing this, Charles jumped off the sofa, and ran out of the shop; but the woman pursued him, and told him he must pay for what he had ate; and of three shillings which he had in his pocket, she said he owed her two, which she took from him. Charles cried bitterly, and said it could not be so much, but she said he was a mean little rascal to want to cheat her, and to go about his business; and so saying, she gave him a push from

THE PLAY GROUND OF MR. WATT'S SCHOOL.



her, and went back into her shop. Charles wandered down the street, crying: he met a lady, who looked very compassionately at him, and asked why he cried? he was ashamed to tell the whole reason, so he answered that he had lost his way. She asked where he wanted to go. He hesitated, and then said to the play-ground of Mr. Watt's school. The lady told him to dry his tears and she would take him there, so she kindly turned with him, and soon led him to the entrance of the play-ground.

The school was some time out, and Charles was soon surrounded by the boys—particularly the bad ones, who, unlike good boys, had not gone home to tea. He exhibited his battledore and shuttlecock, his balls, his tops, and his marbles, and boasted how many fine things he had besides these, and how much money he had spent. The boys looked and wondered, but being bad boys, instead of feeling pleased that a companion had got any nice thing, they were angry and spiteful. "And who," said one of the oldest of them, "who gave you all the money? Did you steal it?" Charles was irritated into a rage by their impertinence, and wishing to appear as great as possible, he answered, "Steal it, indeed!—you impudent monkey—my papa gave me a whole dollar for being a good boy." "My papa gave me a whole dollar for being a good boy, and *playing the truant*," repeated the boy, mimicking Charles, and all the rest burst into fits of laughing, and repeated the words, at the same time twitching

Charles by the sleeves and skirts of his jacket. He was speechless with fury ; for besides all the feelings of shame, disgrace, guilt, and rage, that filled his poor little heart, the intoxicating liquor he had drank was now in his head, and he scarce knew what he did. He flew at the boys ; boxed one, scratched another, kicked at a third ; they shouted and laughed, and returned his blows. Bad boys are always cowards ; so instead of fighting it out one to one, they all attacked him, threw him down, and beat him cruelly ; the big boy who first provoked him, ran away with his fine battledore and shuttlecock, another seized his top and marbles, and another his ball. Drittied, hurt, and enraged, Charles sprung from the ground to rescue the playthings for which he had sacrificed so much, and darted upon the thief of his marbles ; but he being a much bigger, stronger boy, and besides that, not having drank any *cordial* that afternoon, with one unmerciful blow drove poor Charles once more to the ground—his face struck a large stone, the blood burst from his nose and mouth ; he fainted with the agony, and immediately they all ran off and left him.

A gentleman who had a son in that school, was passing at the moment, and partly saw the battle : observing that Charles did not move, he humanely went into the play-ground, and raised him. He could scarcely believe that the bloody, bruised, dirty child, was Charles Annesley ; but he took him in his arms, and carried him home to his father's house, which was at no great distance.

My dear little readers, how little can you understand, or even guess at the sorrow of a mother, or a father, when they see their child brought home in such a state!—you may believe me, you will never know a sorrow so great till you are yourselves fathers and mothers. Charles had come to himself before they reached his father's door,—and how dreadful were his feelings!—Streaming with blood, his body hurt and bruised by the cruel boys, for the sake of whose expected admiration, applause, or envy, he had committed so many sins, told so many lies—here he was going home wretched and terrified to his papa and mamma.

Oh, was all a dollar could buy, worth such misery as he endured? And what had it bought for him? Nothing but sorrow, disappointment, anger, a sick and oppressed stomach, a bad headache, a cruel beating, and a sore sore heart;—and such like are ever and ever, my dear children, the consequences of sin, either in childhood or manhood. The punishment may not always follow *so quickly* as it did to Charles; *but it always comes some time*. If not on earth, how much more awful to think it will come after we die, *in the endless ages of eternity*.

Soon after Charles was carried home, he began to vomit most violently, and his poor mamma was puzzled to imagine when or where he had eaten such a quantity of stuff; but to all her inquiries he only answered with sobs and tears, so she thought it best to give over questioning him for that night. Poor Charles, when left alone,

shed many bitter tears ; and thought he had been punished enough for his cunning and duplicity about the dollar ; but alas ! his punishment was only begun. In the morning a man called upon his father, and said, he was sent by a magistrate, to mention that his son Charles was accused of having stolen a silver dollar from a lady in a shop ; and that it was distinctly proved that he had spent it in a toy-shop, and in a pastry cook's, where he was seen eating, and drinking cordial.

Mr. Annesley exclaimed that it was utterly impossible that his boy could be so wicked ; whoever had said so had told a base falsehood ! The man replied that the very reason the magistrate had sent him was to let Mr. Annesley know that the circumstances were so distinctly proved against his son, that it would be better for him to pay the dollar at once, than have the boy any farther affronted, or perhaps publicly punished. He said the lady had gone into a shop to buy something, and laid down her handkerchief, and her purse with one silver dollar in it, on the counter, while she looked at some goods, and when she turned round again, they were both away, no one could tell how, but some one must have slipped in at the door, and snatched them up.

About an hour after this, Charles had gone to a toy-shop, and endeavored to change a silver dollar, which he said he had found ; and when the man of the shop told him it was wrong to spend it, he got into a great rage, and snatched up the dollar, and the man saw he ran down the street into another toy-shop, where it was found

he spent five shillings : From that he went to a confectioner's, where he spent two shillings in eating and drinking ; from that he went to the play-ground, where he told he had got a dollar from his papa, for being a good boy : quarrelled with some of his companions for saying he had played the truant, and got beat by them. Mr. Annesley felt as if his very heart would break ; he turned away without saying a word to the man, except to tell the magistrate he would call upon him in about an hour, and going up to Charles' room, he sat down by his bed-side. He would scarce have known him for his own boy,—his eyes and nose were blue, and his cheeks scratched and swelled with crying, and there was a great blue bump upon his brow ; conscious of guilt, he did not dare to look his father in the face—“Charles,” said he, in a stern voice, “tell me, and as you value your life, tell me the truth, did you steal a dollar last night ? Oh, have I lived to ask my own child if he is *a thief!*” Charles could not speak for a moment, he was so stunned ; he wished that the earth could open and hide him for ever.

His father repeated the question in even a more dreadful voice.—“Oh, no, no, papa, I did *not* steal it ; indeed, indeed, I did not.”—“Where, then, unhappy boy, did you get it ?” said his father. “I got it from a gentleman for finding his pocket-book,” said Charles, sobbing as if his heart would break.

“ You got it from a gentleman for finding his pocket-book !” repeated his father ; “ to one you

have told that you *found* it, to another that *I gave it to you*, and here is a third story; which of them, most wretched, *wicked* child, is the truth, or are they all falsehoods together?" Charles started out of bed, and throwing himself on the floor before his father, almost choked with sobs and cries, he exclaimed, "Oh my papa, my papa, I have been a *very* wicked boy; I did, I know I did, tell these two lies; but indeed, indeed, papa, I am telling the truth now; I got the dollar from a gentleman I never saw before, for picking up his book on the road."—"And you spent it upon toys, and sweetmeats, and upon cordial to make yourself drunk? Oh, what a very dreadful child you are!" and his father hid his face in his hands and groaned. "Oh papa, I bought toys and sweatmeats, but I did not buy that stuff, it was a young man gave it me in the confectioner's shop." "Well, Charles, you have brought yourself, and your parents, into a situation of shame and disgrace, from which they never can recover. You are accused of stealing that dollar from the counter of a shop, and but for the respect which Mr. Innes the magistrate has for your father and mother, you would this morning have been carried to the common prison, and perhaps tried and have to remain there a good part of your life." "But, papa, I will go to Mr. Innes, and tell him I got it from that gentleman —." "You will tell, and who will believe *a liar*? I feel that I cannot believe you, and if your own father feels that, what must strangers? No, Charles, your character is ruin-

ed for life, never more need you hope to be believed or trusted, *even when you tell the truth* :”—as he said this, he slowly left the room, and went away to the magistrate's house. He felt that he had not one word to say in defense of his unhappy little boy, so he silently paid the dollar, and returned home; ashamed as he walked along the street, to look any one in the face; for he thought to himself, “I am the father of a liar and a thief.”

He found Charles back into his bed, and his mother sitting by him weeping bitterly. He sat down beside her, and no longer able to bear the agony of his feelings, he sobbed and wept also. My dear children, what do you think were Charles' thoughts and feelings then? Had they beaten him almost to death, he would not have felt half so bitterly as he did, to see his father and his mother in such deep distress; all caused by his wickedness. How very poor, how pitiful, did all a dollar could procure—all he had even *hoped* to procure for it, now appear to him, in comparison with the sufferings it had caused! Ah, my children, pray to God that he would help you to think of that *before*, instead of *after*, you have sinned.

Charles wept without intermission, and towards the afternoon he appeared so very ill, and had such a dreadful headach, that his mamma sent for a doctor. He told her that Charles was taking a fever; and so he was. For many weeks his life was in great danger. No one thought he could live—and what he suffered during these

weeks ! the pain in his head, and in his breast, and in his limbs was so great that it made him scream out constantly. His beautiful curly hair was all shaved off, and a blister put upon his head ; another blister was put upon his breast. He was bled at both arms, and many leeches were put on different parts of his body ; he had to take bitter medicines, and endure more things than I can make you understand.

A thousand times he would have wished to die, but when that wish rose in his mind, it was always followed by the thought of his sins, and the recollection of the dreadful words in the Bible, "*Every liar shall have his portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone;*" and then he would shriek aloud, and pray to God to spare his life that he might try and be a good boy. His dear and tender mother hung over him night and day, holding him in her arms, and shedding tears for his sufferings. At last he began very slowly to recover, but was so weak that he could not feed himself, or raise himself in bed. He was no more the little happy merry boy he used to be ; sad and melancholy, he lay without ever speaking ; thinking constantly about the dollar and all it had brought upon him.

One day his mamma was sitting by him, and she spoke to him on the subject, and begged he would now tell her the exact truth. Charles burst into tears, and repeated exactly all that had happened,—adding, “whoever stole the dollar, mamma, it was not me ; Oh no, I was bad, bad, but I did not do that.”

His mother sighed deeply, and said she believed he was telling the truth now ; but no other body would believe that ; and he must, through all his after life, bear the dreadful name of *thief*, unless it should please God to justify him from the false charge brought against him. A charge, she pointed out to him, that never could have been made against him, had he not first made himself a liar. She told him to pray constantly to God that he would be so merciful as to save him from telling another lie, and be pleased to send some way of showing to the world he was not a thief also,—and this, poor Charles did with all the earnestness of a broken and a contrite heart.

About two months after this, one day when they were sitting at breakfast, a very neat little parcel was brought in, addressed to Mr. Annesley. It had come by the coach from Boston, and Charles felt very curious to know what was in it. He thought papa very slow at undoing the strings, and that he would have done it much quicker,—at length the last paper was unrolled,—a little neat box appeared, and a letter for his papa. The box was opened, and in it lay a most beautiful little gold watch ! his papa read the letter aloud,—it was thus :—

“ SIR,—About three months ago, as I was walking along the public road, near your house, I dropped a very valuable pocket-book, which was picked up, and instantly restored to me by your little son. At the time, having no more loose

money on me than would pay my expenses to Boston, I could only present him with the trifling reward of a dollar. Had I lost that pocket-book, I must have been ruined; and I therefore beg you will present to the little fellow who saved me from such a misfortune, the watch which accompanies this, with my very best and kindest good wishes. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

F. WALSHAM."

"Oh, papa, papa!" cried Charles, throwing his arms round his papa's neck, "You see I was not a thief. Oh! God has heard my prayers,—every body will know now that I was not a thief." "Most grateful am I to God for shewing that, my poor boy, and also for checking you so severely at your outset in sin; but, Charles, can you accept of that watch?" His father turned round the back of it to him, and shewed him his own name beautifully engraved on it, and the words—"The reward of truth and honesty.
1st July 1826."

Charles' face grew crimson, and then pale.—He struggled with himself for a moment or two, and then bursting into tears, he said,—"No, papa, the watch cannot be mine,—I was that day neither honest nor true,—send it back to Mr. Walsingham, and tell him so,—tell him all my shame;" and he sobbed as if his heart would break. His father and mother folded him in their arms, and said to him, that never did they hope to love him so well again as they did at that moment,—for they felt that he then was *truly*

good, and could acknowledge his sin without seeking a disguise for it. Charles often afterwards said, it was strange, he bitterly regretted giving up the beautiful watch, he would have been so proud to wear ; and yet, perhaps, it was the happiest moment of his life, when he was folded in the fond embrace of a father and a mother, pleased and delighted with him, because he had strength of mind to give it up, when he felt he did not deserve it.

A few weeks after this, Mrs. Annesley told Charles she wished him to go with her to a watch-maker's shop, where she was going to leave her watch to be repaired. Charles hated to go out in the streets, for he thought every body looked at him and said, "there goes the little thief :" however he obeyed his mamma, and went to the shop with her. While the man was looking at his mamma's watch, a lady, and a little girl about his own age, came in. When the lady saw the master of the shop was engaged, she stood still, without asking for what she wanted ; and the little girl began to look at the pretty things in the glass cases on the counter,—all at once she cried out,—“ Mamma, there is your purse that was stolen,—look, mamma !” “ Hush, my dear,” said her mamma, “ one purse may be like another.” “ No, mamma, indeed, but it *is* your purse ; for there is the very stitch of yellow silk with which I mended it, when little James let it fall and broke one of the gold links ; look, mamma !” The lady looked, and turning to the master of the shop, she said, “ may I ask where you bought that

purse, sir, for it is certainly very like the one I lost about three months ago ;" the man looked very troubled, and said,—“I do not think it can be yours,—I bought it from a very honest woman.” “Well,” said the lady, “it will be easily known if it is my purse, for, if it is so, the gold studs that at present seem quite confused, will, when drawn in a particular way, form the initials of my name, M. H. M.” The man took out the purse, the lady drew it, and the letters, M. H. M. appeared. “It *is* your purse, mamma,” cried the little girl, “I am *so* glad.” “Sir,” said the lady, turning to the master of the shop, “do you know from whom you bought this purse ?” “Yes, ma’am,” said the man. “Then,” said the lady, “you will please to attend at the house of Mr. Innes, the magistrate, this afternoon, along with the person.” “Oh, ma’am,” said the man, “you are quite welcome to take the purse, since you have proved it yours.” “No,” replied the lady, “that will not do. A little boy, the son of respectable parents, was unjustly accused, and, as I thought, convicted of stealing this purse ; and if he was innocent, it is my duty to prove that, and have him restored to the good opinion he lost.” Charles, who had listened to all this in breathless anxiety, could stand it no longer, he burst into a fit of sobbing, and darting forward to the lady, cried out, “Indeed, indeed, I *was* quite innocent,—I never saw that purse before,—mamma will tell you, I *didn’t* steal your dollar.” The surprise of the lady may be imagined; but Mrs. Annesley spoke to her, and explained the circumstances, and when the lady understood that

Charles was the little boy so unjustly accused of stealing her purse, she felt more than ever resolved to find out who did it. So she desired the shopman to give her the name of the woman immediately, and she sent a proper person to bring her instantly to the magistrate's; when this wicked woman found that she was discovered, she thought it best to confess that she was in the shop buying something the night the lady came in, and laid down her handkerchief and purse; so she just whipped them into her lap, and walked away with them; and as she was supposed to be quite an honest woman, the people of the shop never suspected her when the purse was missed.

Oh! how great was the joy of Charles at being thus justified! How great his gratitude to God who had thus heard his prayers! How deeply did he feel that God hears and answers *every prayer*, even of the littlest child, *if it comes from the heart*. Yes, he felt this, and he never forgot it.

A few days after this, another letter came from Mr. Walsingham, returning the watch, and saying, that "since Charles had the honesty to confess how guilty he had been, he deserved to wear the watch,—to put it in his pocket; and if ever he felt again tempted to sin as he had done, to pull it out, *and think of the 1st of July 1826.*"

His father and mother folded him to their bosom, and bade God bless and guide him.

My dear little readers, Charles Annesley's *first lie* was also his *last*. May our heavenly Father bless all of you, and preserve you from either committing such sins, or enduring such punishments.





The Play-Ground.



Children looking at a Bee-Hive.